

baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by justice shall counsel.

Why forgo the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world—so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it, for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements (I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy)—I repeat it therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectably defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed—in order to give to trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them—conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another—that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character—that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish—that they will control the usual current of the passions or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good, that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism—this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22d of April 1793 is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of your representatives in both houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the

case, had a right to take—and was bound in duty and interest to take—a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors and dangers.

GEO. WASHINGTON.

UNITED STATES, 19th September 1796.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, morning business is closed.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Linda Thomas-Greenfield, of Louisiana, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations.

## RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

## BUSINESS BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, it has only been a month since President Biden took the oath of office and Democrats assumed the majority in the Senate, but we have already taken some major steps to repair and rebuild our country.

I said this Chamber would begin its work by accomplishing three immediate tasks: confirming President Biden's nominees, addressing the COVID pandemic with bold legislation, and conducting a fair and honest impeachment trial of Donald Trump. The Senate has made steady progress on all three.

A little over a week ago, we concluded the second impeachment trial of Donald Trump. The House managers presented a powerful, harrowing reconstruction of the former President's role in inciting an attack against our democracy—the greatest offense ever—committed by a President of the United States. Despite the final verdict of this Chamber, Donald Trump deserves to be convicted, and I believe he will be convicted in the court of public opinion. History will judge Mr. Trump harshly, deservedly so, and everyone who condoned the dangerous final acts of his Presidency will live with that in history as well and live rather dishonorably.

Even during the impeachment trial, the Senate advanced the ball on the two other priorities I mentioned. Our committees conducted several confirmation hearings and worked closely with their House colleagues to draft COVID relief legislation. That process is ongoing among Senate Members, as well as over in the House. Now that the trial is complete, we are going to move forward on both fronts.

Democrats remain hard at work preparing the desperately needed COVID relief bill, which is on track to go to the President's desk before the March 14 expiration of unemployment insurance benefits, and starting this evening, the Senate will continue the process of confirming President Biden's

nominees with a vote on Linda Thomas-Greenfield to serve as the next U.N. Ambassador.

Ms. Thomas-Greenfield has spent three decades in the U.S. Foreign Service. She is exceptionally qualified, and that was reflected in the bipartisan support she received from the Foreign Relations Committee. If confirmed, she will assume the role of U.N. Ambassador at a time when the nations of the world must deepen their cooperation on the fight against COVID-19 and the fight against climate change, among other critical priorities. She will have no time to waste in rebuilding America's reputation and reasserting the first instrument of American power—diplomacy. I look forward to voting in favor of her nomination.

After that, the Senate will immediately proceed to the nomination of Tom Vilsack to serve as the Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. Vilsack is no stranger to the Senate confirmation process or to the Department of Agriculture in having served as its Secretary under President Obama. The former Governor of Iowa has made a career out of caring for and supporting our Nation's farmers. Mr. Vilsack was approved by the Agriculture Committee by a unanimous vote. I expect he will receive the same bipartisan reception by the full Senate.

For the rest of the week, we will continue to confirm Members of the President's Cabinet: first, Jennifer Granholm to serve as the Secretary of Energy; second, Dr. Miguel Cardona to serve as the Secretary of Education. Both nominees have been advanced by the respective committees with bipartisan votes—a pattern this week.

At a time when our Nation is gripped by a once-in-a-century crisis, the President deserves to have his nominees approved quickly by this Chamber so they can immediately get to work healing our great country.

## CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, on another matter entirely, today, the United States will surpass more than 500,000 deaths from COVID-19—a half a million souls.

How as a nation do we grapple with this enormous tragedy? How do we even comprehend a number that big or a loss that great? Do we imagine five of our largest football stadiums, filled to the max, wiped out in an instant? The city of Atlanta or Sacramento erased overnight? A 9/11 attack every single day for 169 days in a row?

They say a single death is a tragedy, but a million deaths is a statistic. We must not let this tragic milestone wash over us like just another awful statistic stacked on top of a year's worth of awful statistics. Instead, we must treat this moment as 500,000 individual tragedies: the empty chair at the dinner table; the empty half of the bed at night that people are suffering through; the unplayed pianos and uncelebrated birthdays and funerals that were never held; the neighbors and colleagues and friends and family who

died without a chance for their loved ones to hold their hands; the grandchildren, wrapped in protective gear, waving goodbye to grandparents from across the silence of a hospital room—500,000 American souls and counting.

There is no way—no way—to properly account for the loss of so many lives in so short a time, but I would ask my fellow Americans to mark this terrible day by doing two simple things.

First, keep in your hearts the families who have lost a loved one. Reach out to that colleague or friend, and offer sympathy and support. Stop for a moment and grieve for your fellow citizens or for someone you have lost personally. We all know someone who is gone. I learned of another one yesterday.

And, second, let us strive to end this pandemic as swiftly as possible. For us in the Congress, that means moving forward with legislation to speed vaccine distribution and help the American people during this time of economic crisis, which is what the American Rescue Plan is all about, but every American can contribute by continuing to follow the guidelines and staying safe, by not losing hope or patience as we round the final corner.

We will—we will—get through this, but, today, let us mourn the 500,000 Americans we have lost and commit ourselves to a future when the days of these tragic milestones are finally and firmly behind us.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 9.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Jennifer Mulhern Granholm, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Energy.

## CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows: